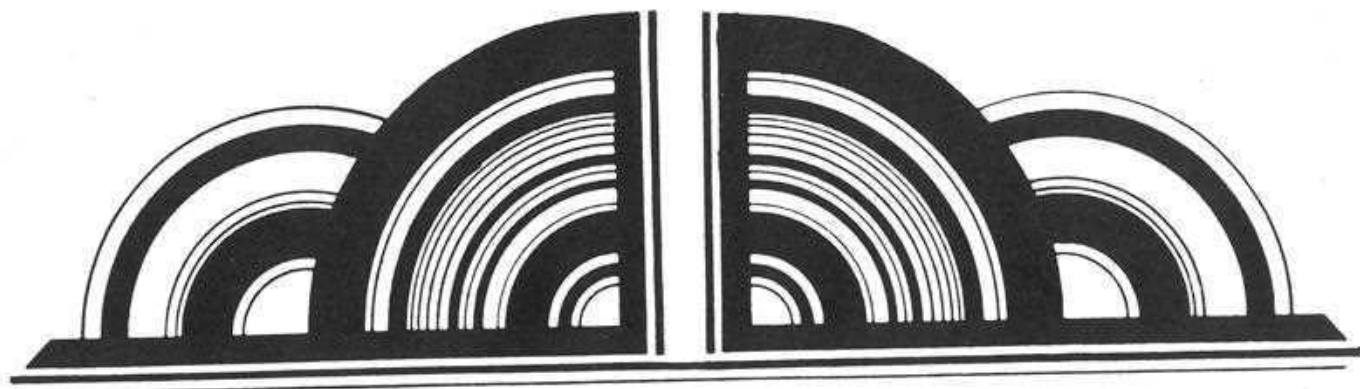




Winter 1984-85

THE SAMOYED QUARTERLY

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SAMOYED PEOPLE



The Samoyed Quarterly
Talks With
Bob and Dolly Ward
STARCTIC KENNELS
Calabasas, California

This interview was conducted by Cynthia Kerstiens in the home of Bob and Dolly Ward in July, 1982. Additions and corrections were added in June, 1984

How did you get started in dogs?

Dolly: My husband, Bob, was the one who started it all. Being married in January, 1942 after Pearl Harbor meant a year of separation as Bob was in the Army in the Pacific

arena. Then with the transfer to the states and reassignment to Fort Custer Michigan Military Police School, the travel necessary to "follow orders" took us around a great part of the USA and therefore the opportunity to visit kennels and see dogs all over the country. He took me to the Golden Gate Show in San Francisco, in 1943.

The show was benched and we studied every breed but chose the glamorous Samoyed. We obtained the names of Aljean and Agnes Mason whose entries were on the bench and made arrangements to visit their kennels in Sacramento. That was before Agnes had named them the White Way Kennels. One visit, some

90 miles from San Francisco to Sacramento, turned into several visits in our quest to obtain a certain puppy from a particular litter which we liked. It was the famous Herdsman litter, Ch. Herdsman's Chattigan out of Silver Star of White Way. Our puppy became Ch. Star-chak CD, winner of thirty-two Best of Breeds which, in those days, was a tremendous record. A limited number of nine or ten shows were held on the Pacific Coast with some group placings, never first unfortunately.

Also, we wrote to Samoyed breeders in the East and after more study, selected Helen Harris of the Snowland Kennels, Pennsylvania to

obtain one of her finest bitches by pedigree. She did a lot of winning, she won the first National Specialty held out here in Pasadena in 1947. Anyway, this letter was accompanied by a picture of our Starchak with the comment that we wanted a bitch to match the "quality of Starchak," and that she was to be our foundation bitch. The bitch Helen Harris sent us had a four generation pedigree on one side and went back to the expedition dogs. She was sired by Ch. Siberian Nansen of Farningham of Snowland, out of Dol of Snowland. Ernest Kanavel was listed as the breeder because he owned Dol of Snowland. Nansen was 12-years-old when he sired this litter, and Nansen's sire was 12 when he sired Nansen and the grandsire was 12, so they covered 36 years in three generations! That was in 1944, so it got back to the expedition dogs in a hurry. Perhaps feeling that we did grow up on the original dogs like Anarctic Bru and Buck Polar Light and the pictures in Hutchinsons which you can all find, we are naturalists and feel that the Samoyeds should be no different than they were out of the Arctic except for nutrition and good care.

People ask us if we prefer the bear head or the wolf head and we say we cannot endure either one because neither one explains the original Samoyed head. Now we believe to designate 40% muzzle to the total wedge head is more specific.

Bob worked our dogs on bicycles in harness and with "sled on wheeled rig." At that time we lived on an oval track near Culver City. He ran them around the mile track which used to be a race track and is now a paved oval street in a residen-



Witan, Tog, and Missy



Dolly and Chatter - Ch. Starchak CD

tial section.

We considered ourselves fortunate as the years went by to start with two such excellent examples of the Samoyed breed - the male Starchak and the female, Staryvna of Snowland, known as Chatter and Tog. Ch. Starchak CD would meet Ch. Chinde of Caspar CDX in the ring many times each having his turn at the win of the day. Mae Pridham trained Chinde in obedience for Lois and Lillian Rayner and handled Chinde for them in breed. It is remarkable to see Mae Pridham still in the ring today after all these

years - and her own great Airedales have become Lakeland or Welsh Terrier in size - (a little like my turning to our Beagle for a smaller dog to show). Chinde was a half-brother to Starchak through their mutual dam, Ch. Silver Star of White Way, who looked like our Starctic Aukeo of more recent times.

Pictures of Chat and Chinde show the two different kinds of champions who battled it out graciously in the ring from about 1944 to 1952. Chinde was more of the English Kobe type and Chatter the English Arctic type. You may notice



L to R: Ch. Chinde of Caspar, Ch. Snowland Stara, CD, and Ch. Zantook of Breezewood



Ch. Staretic Storm

the body substance differential, as well as head, in these pictures.

Do you think there should be prerequisites for becoming a judge?

Dolly: Bob feels it is well to have more than one champion of the breed you are going to judge because you learn the slight variations and can appreciate the variety and still pick out type for the breed.

We do feel that one of the worst things that is becoming noticeable in the breed today, 1983-84, is that Sams are becoming Chow-like and cobbier with bigger coats. They are unfortunately breeding shorter legs (we still emphasize the need for the standard quoted 55% leg from the elbow to the ground with the measurement taken at the withers). The length of leg is not masked by coat.

Did you do obedience work as well as conformation?

Bob: We did a lot of obedience work both in the ring and in various activities. In fact my masters degree in Education was written on "The Dog In Obedience." A curriculum on training a dog in obedience, in harness and other activities such as packing - which we used in part in the Coloring Book for children authorized as an AWARD Book entitled "Color Me Puppy."

Our daughters, Mardee and Lindy took dogs through obedience work to their titles and one of the Pembroke Welsh Corgis was High in Trial in Las Vegas.

Our girls were also active in "Children's Handling" which it was called in those days when it was more casual. Today the Junior Handling is specifically structured and most competitive with finals at the Garden. There is some good and some bad in this progress.

What is your pet peeve in the breed?

Dolly: We would say in unison, BIG BONE. Bone too massive for the dog. Gross, clumsy.

How have dog shows changed since those earlier days?

Bob: We drove to the Chicago International Show in 1946. We used to drive more than is done now with the use of airlines. We went to friends' homes at their invitation, had lots more fun that we seem to have today, more social and on a personal level. Today the shows are more "blood and guts, out to win," than in the slower pace of yore. Some people attend and do their thing and then leave as soon as their breed or even their class is finished. They do not learn a thing doing that. My point is they used to learn about dogs more and we certainly got to know each other better. It seemed more learning about dogs took place than what does this and that judge

want? Now there seems to be more arbitrary barriers despite the motor-home scene, where we are competitors and not as much spirit of comradery as before.

That is interesting, you hear all these people socializing dogs today but no "socializing people"!

Dolly: Well, people need socializing too, to understand each other better. We've always had the problem that we've done our share of winning and that doesn't make friends really well. Our intent is not to make enemies but unfortunately you do.

Now Boloff of Altai was a champion we bought sight unseen from Lucille Miller in Albuquerque from his pedigree and "this picture" in the Bulletin which showed a gorgeous head and expression. When he arrived from the Altai Kennels in New Mexico, he was not at all what we expected. He did contribute well to the breed with his type. He had the right proportions and was neither large nor small. We used to laugh and say, "A 'little' bit of Bo will do it." Only a little bit of "Bo" in the pedigree of a litter would give you all the pizzazz you needed for a showman.

Bob: Ch. Rainier was bred by Betsy Wyman in Santa Barbara by our Ch. Starchak CD out of her Snowy Dayn who went back to Vera Lawrence's Lensen of Snowland, and to Ice Crystal of the Arctic who was at Helen Harris' Snowland Kennels. Raini created history when Dolly handled him to First in Group at the Sun Maid Show under Major Godsol, the first Samoyed in sixteen years to be a group winner! Raini broke the ice out west then and it has been uphill ever since for the breed to place in the group, until 1983 when Ch. Quicksilver Razz Ma Tazz became Number One Working Dog - KalKan Award.

This picture of Ch. Starectic Storm shows one of our finest champions who reproduced the Agnes Mason White Way good body and legs for a working dog, and the graceful driving gait with Samoyed type. Agnes bred to produce working dogs to be shown.

The first dog show Storm was ever entered in was when he was 3-1/2-years-old in a supported entry by the Southern Group of the Pacific Coast Division of the Samoyed Club of America. It was held at the old Pan Pacific Auditorium where CBS stands today, held at the Los Angeles Kennel Club Show which was run by Meg Bagshaw.

Storm was Best of Breed from the Open Class in an entry of 57 with ten champions entered in Specials, with some of them traveling great distance.

The story of Ch. Starectic Storm



Ch. Kazan of Kentwood (Ch. Starectic Storm x Winter Trails Kazanna

was similar to many of the dogs who had come back to us for some reason or other, as we always asked when we sold a dog that if for any reason they could not keep them they would bring them back to us. This dog had been in the home of an excellent family but they provided little activity for him and being a Houdini and adventurous, Storm would get out and run. With the combination of his superior body structure and the

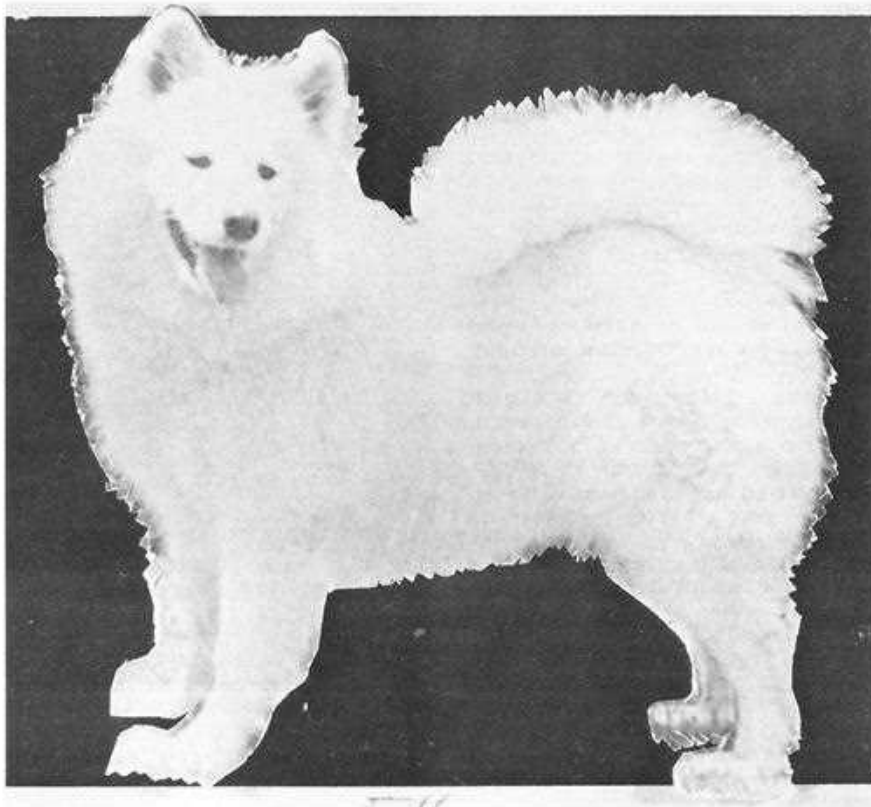
great distances of running "free" his gait and performance was fantastic. It was in this condition he entered his first "show" and while his coat did not show pampering, it was of good type - spikey and stand-off! By the way, Starectic Storm x-rayed perfect hips called "Textbook Quality" in those days.

The picture here of Ch. Nordly's Sammy was another dog we admired but did not own. He was one of the finer dogs for type and not overdone in any way. He won four National Specialties and probably holds the record for that although Ch. Sayan of Woodland, Bob and Evy Kites' "Chuckie" was closest to that record.

Did you breed Ch. Starchak and your Ch. Staryvna of Snowland?

Dolly: We did and this is a picture of their first litter. One was Starchak's Witan, a male and a bitch, Starchak's Weotuma, called "Missy." Missy was one of the finest bitches we ever bred and it was a sad loss to our future breeding to have lost her with a virus before she was two years of age. We might have been encouraged to have more litters and pursue the role of the true breeders who concentrate on the bitches if we hadn't lost both Tog and Missy at early ages.

Billy Tucker bred her Rhanor's Tynda of Petsamo to Ch. Starchak



Ch. Staryvna of Snowland

which produced Ch. Kunto of Encino and with her imported Suretta of Kobe became the foundation stock of her Kobe Kennels in Encino.

In our "W" litter, Starchak's Witgagamote called "Big Starchy" went to Lloyd Bristol who, with Princess Startynda from Ernest McNey, became the foundation stock of Bristol's Startinda Kennels and the beginning of her all-champion sled team. We had Starchak's Witan and there were two other males, one called Starchak's Wigreve (Little Starchy) was 22" tall and the "spittin' image of his grandfather, Ch. Herdsman's Chattigan.

The "W" litter, named after English names in LAW, was a most influential group of Sams. They went mostly to potential breeders and took these bloodlines all over the country through Bristols and Tucker and Wards and some others whose names do not come to mind.

We have the practice of taking stud puppies as choice of litter and had probably 25 or so which is the opposite practice of breeders who plan long-term selections from breeding of their bitches.

This is a picture of Ch. Staretic Aukeo. She has a beautiful head, eye and expression, all of which is most certainly a stamp of type in a breed. Just as Derek Rayne says, "When you see only the head out of the proverbial paper bag, you show know what the breed is." It was Derek who put Aukeo BOS at the National in Portland. Aukeo was owned by Lindy and myself.

We do believe the breeders should have more seminars to arrive at a better understanding of head type as well as the whole Samoyed. In looking through all these pictures you can see a wide variety of heads. We have been excited about looking at pictures of a son of Ann Bark's Ch. Ice Ways Ice Crush who is Ch. Andromeda Tugger of Crush. Tug is the image of our old Starchak which shows you can breed for the original type.

Bob: Going back to a pet peeve, Cynthia, I don't think a person has to run a sled team or hunt their dogs to know what structure is. But anybody who has ever been behind a sled team gets a pretty good rear on a dog when they judge and they will find a good side gait too. If they did that we would have fewer dogs with short upper arms in Sammies. John Tanner in Siberians says, "The hallmark in Siberians is that his upper arm is longer than his shoulder." This is true especially of the herding dogs like the Samoyeds and German Shepherds.

How is the revision of The Complete Samoyed coming?

Dolly: All of our material and pictures are sitting in New York at



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the Howell Book House awaiting the completion, which has taken longer than we anticipated. We don't know how to answer the frequent question of "When will it be out?" All we can say is Howell is not calling it a revision but calling it Volume Two because it will be quite different than the first book except for the history, of course.

Do you have more pet peeves to tell us?

Bob: The double hock is a crippling defect for any breed. It was not discussed in our book but we have excellent pictures to show for the next. In the Northwest they brought out the indepth study of PRA and rather than keeping it hush-hush, they presented education



Ch. Dajja Maskad-E of Calaveras



Ch. Antarectic Bru of Farningham

and clinic research on eye anomalies to help the breed. So, some of the pitfalls in breeding are faced along with hip dysplasia.

Do you think education is the responsibility of the local breed clubs?

Dolly: Yes, partly, but the parent club should be the guiding light in directing and disseminating information and providing more seminars. At least they should back up any programs developed that are worthy contributions made by local Specialty Clubs. It is somewhat disappointing that the 8mm sound film done by the Samoyed Club of Los Angeles, has been so low key for the two years following its making. The objective of the parent club is to be more instrumental in the protection of the breed, and to educate nationwide.

Local clubs have enough to do helping the novices, putting on events, presenting the breed well to the community and a myriad of activities.

In July of 1982, Bob did about 30 Sammies in Connecticut, and the breeders came to him afterwards and said, "You're the first judge that has been checking how the dogs' shoulders are laid on. Not many standards talk about it but they should for it has to do with the degree the dog will single track or not." Our breed has some pretty champions who have no reach at all which puts them right out of the working dog class, especially when you think about how Shepherds move.

We have not even touched on our pet peeves of coat, that is the

proper type and quality of coat which is so much more important than the quantity of coat. We see that more trimming is being done and even sculpturing which was never done in the past. Fundamentally, the Sam has a more double coat with spikey off-standing top coat which is more harsh and the soft woolly undercoat. Never should it be long and flowing or lacy and wavy, descriptive of an open coat which is untypical. It should be water repellent and not conducive to holding ice formations within the coat. Often we wish the judges would appreciate what type of coat is proper. The Siberian coat called for is soft but it is water repellent which is required in Northern breeds. It is very sad to see off-type coated Sammies go up anyplace. We don't care how good they are otherwise. This is really OFF-TYPE for the breed.

What about gait?

Dolly: We think Mike Smith of Ice Ways in Arkansas wrote one of the finest articles on gait we have ever read. A copy should be in each fancier's library and it should be in a seminar.

What do you like to see in an ideal Samoyed?

Dolly: Temperament that is typical - loyal, sweet and outgoing. This subject is not handled widely enough in the standard, but we think this is a particular quality of the working dog no matter what their work! We think the Samoyed should have been put into the Herding group when AKC split the working group.

What do you mean by balance?

Dolly: A balanced dog is one who does not pull so much with his front than he drags with his rear; he also does not drive so much from the rear that he pushes his front. A balanced dogs front and rear move with the same arcs and speeds, front and rear, with the same strengths and they move over the ground very lightly! This balanced dog is the rare one in the ring going around that moves his legs slower than anyone else and yet covers more ground. It is a thrill to see.

What do you mean by expression?

Dolly: Samoyed expression is not well understood but thoroughly delightful when present. We refer to the smiling Samoyed, that is the position of the eye, mouth and the ear set, all extremely important. The shape of the eye rather triangular, NOT ROUND with a slight slant upward toward the base of the ear, NOT FLAT or horizontal across the face. We do not like a BIG MOUTH, flews drooping, coarse or gross. We have lately discovered the identification of 40% muzzle to total head wedge.

What about pink in the lips or eye rims?

Dolly: Of course pink is not preferred as the black "POINTS" are more expressive for expression but the pink genes are carried from those genetically transmitted from original specimens. "Pinky of Farningham" obviously was such a dog of old and the pink present decided her name.

England bred for the black as it was more attractive. In puppies the

smokier pink has a better prognosis for turning black than the bright shell pink color. We leave medical subjects to the vet.

You haven't seen our dogs yet, Cynthia. Painter loves to be petted and greet new people. He's fourteen (in August, 1984, re-editing the interview). Sioux is my special pet, kind of a "wild" one who could survive anywhere. She is the one we rehabilitated at her first year of age when someone didn't want her anymore. She is officially Starctic Snowbasin Sioux CD. She did earn her CD in three shows but she will come absolutely ONLY if she wants to come. However, I can trust her to run loose because no dog catcher could ever get a hand on her!

How many shows do you

judge on an average in a year?

Bob: About 35 shows a year. Twelve weekends we ride our Morgan horses with a horse group. For 17 years I rode with another group called the White Mountain Range Riders, (men only) in Arizona. On that weekend each July, Dolly goes to the Lompoc and Santa Barbara shows. 35 shows times 160 dogs equals roughly 7000 dogs a year. In 1949 there were about 190 shows. In the USA today, there are just over 1000 all-breed shows. We think it has been one of the most pleasant kind of hobbies that we can imagine. It is a family oriented activity if the kids take to it, and fortunately ours did. They were in Children's Handling before it became so structured and so serious. The

dog game stimulates your mind. There is always something more to learn. You have the physical exercise of handling your own dogs, if you are able, and this is most enjoyable. It is not just going out for a win but you go out for the company of others and see the success in the dogs breeding.

One daughter, Mardee, went on in the sport and has become a judge of Samoyed and Siberians. Lindy preferred enjoying the animals at home, and raising her family of one boy, Lance, and two girls, Megyn and Molly, our grandchildren, with her husband Kelly, head coach at Paso Robles High School.

What about the pronunciation and the breed name?

Dolly: Bob researched this at the Russian Department at UCLA and they accent the last syllable, Sammy 'ed, explaining that there is no "o" in the Russian Language, from which we take the name of the nomadic tribe using the word Sammy 'ed for the breed name. They were called Baliquers which might have been a good name for the breed and maybe we could have all said that the same. But as it is, you hear Samoyed pronounced in many, many ways. We think using the names of two boys, Sammy and Ed, and accenting the Ed is as close as we Americans might approximate the sharp explosive Russian pronunciation.

One year at the Garden when Chet Collier was giving the descriptions of the breeds for the spectators and cable TV, he said the Samoyeds were "ALWAYS PURE WHITE." This is a fact which we all know is not true with the lemon or buff color in the coats of many exhibits. And I thought that was really misinformation going out to wherever all this goes. So I scribbled on an envelope, sort of Abe Lincoln style, what color should say, quoting the standard. And I didn't know who he was at the time, but I said I wanted to see the man on the P.A. It turned out to be Chet Collier, who now judges the breed, interestingly enough. And he wrote this very nice letter: "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Ward, I've been meaning to write to you for some time, but immediately following the Garden I ended up in the hospital with the flu and pneumonia. I do appreciate your calling to my attention the fact that Samoyeds need not be pure white. Certainly I will have that card corrected by next year. If I appeared to be abrupt the night of the Garden, please accept my apologies, but you can well imagine how many long hours all of us had worked. When I have the Samoyed's card completed, I'll send it to you for any suggestions you might have." I thought that was very nice of Chet, that he would make a change.



Ch. Starctic Aukeo, a Painter daughter (bitch from Alaska)

We stewarded at the Garden for 17 years. Very educational. One of our pet peeves about people in the dog game is that many will go to a dog show and watch only the breed. Some will watch only until the class is finished. If they lose they go home. They do not stay to watch anything else at the show or take time to pick anyone else's brain. The number of Sammy people who watch the breed and stay for the group is a small minority. In the past twelve years or so that we have observed the fancy we have noticed that those who stayed and studied out of interest and pleasure were those who have done better inbreeding and winning. Some of those people were Bob Krauss, Danny Middleton, Liz Hooyman and the Curtises. We weren't in the East enough to include names from there.

How about the early shows?

Dolly: We used to do more driving than flying. Jean Blank with Ch. Yurok of Whitecliff used to put 80,000 miles on a car in a year. She wore out cars, but she and "Rocky" as he was called were a team and he was always presented beautifully. Judges began to "look" at the Sams and place them in the groups. He was one of the first big winners in campaigning and acquired five BIS from countless group placements in the West.

We have been blessed with knowing many of our founders in the breed, the beginning people. Now Catherine Quereaux - I have to admire her as I think over the years what she really did. Whether you agreed with everything she wrote or not is immaterial. Catherine Quereaux held the Sammy Club together all by herself for 20 years. She wrote the Bulletin. You didn't advertise in those days, and she wrote it up. She gathered the news, and reprinted everything from all over the country to make people feel they were a part of the bigger scene than just where they lived. The dogs that she imported - Snowland's Stars and Deyomas of Ibur. All these things she wrote up in informational bulletin form, mimeographed. It carried all club business.

What was your first dog show?

Dolly: It was at the Los Angeles Kennel Club Show held in Gilmore Stadium which was at the corner of Fairfax and Beverly in Hollywood, where CBS now stands, in 1943. We took Starchak, Chatter as we called him. We were so proud of our puppy, we'll never forget being novices that day. We went in our station wagon with the dog and the pin brush and that was all. It was easy in those days; now it's a production with the motor homes and all the grooming tools, tables and



Ch. Cnejinka - "Jinka"

tabulations! There were 37 Samoyeds entered with 4 or 5 champions with William Kendrick judging. He still looks the same now to us, of course. They are honoring him in Philadelphia this November 1984 with the Centennial AKC Show as one of the longest in service "Senior Judges." Chatter was entered in the Senior puppy class as he was ten months old, and in every other class for which he was eligible up to Winners. Bob was a wrestler and thought you have to work "up the ladder" as in wrestling matches. Now Chatter won every class so you know what the Winners Class looked like. There was only one dog, Starchak! Mr. Kendrick, wearing his familiar straw hat, had to laugh. With the entry of 37, we took the breed. Starchak was Best of Breed and fourth in the group, so you know how many friends we had that day!

It did make a lot of activity in

California. We supported shows, had benching, trophies and we all worked very hard. We started the first Southern California group for the breed. The first Sammy entry of over 100 dogs was in Long Beach in 1950. Bob was show chairman for that, and he had a big banquet and souvenirs, and lots of enthusiasm. That was the show where Verlis Prince Comet, owned by Shirley Hill, the dog that had been given away at a raffle, won the Breed, under Chris Knudson, who said after doing over 100 dogs, he never wanted to see another white dog in all his life. This event had come a long way from a Specialty that was held in 1929 in Tuxedo Park, when Morgan Wing was the first delegate to the American Kennel Club for the Sammy Club of America.

To be continued ...